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Editorial: Time to end Sunday ban

THE ISSUE

State Sen. Phillip Boots looks to end state's ban on selling carryout cold beer on Sundays.

OUR VIEW

There is no rational defense for keeping these so-called "Blue Laws."

Let's try this one more time.

It was about a year ago that the dream of ending the ridiculous ban on Sunday liquor sales in the state of Indiana once again died an unceremonious death.

Yet, the reasons for keeping the ban in place seemed to have nothing to do with safety or religiosity: It was all about the cold, hard cash.

"The House Public Policy Committee voted 8-5 to turn down the measure," reported Aric Chokey of The Associated Press on Jan. 27, 2016. "Opponents cited concerns of giving an unfair advantage to grocery stores over smaller liquor stores. Big-box grocery chains and liquor stores have fought for years

over legalizing Sunday sales as similar proposals were made in the Legislature."

We continue to find ourselves in the position of being one of the only states in the nation with these so-called "Blue Laws." Here is the entire list: Alabama, Indiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and West Virginia. And, on top of that, we are the only state in the country that bans beer, wine and liquor sales on Sundays.

Jan. 3, Indianapolis Republican State Sen. Phillip Boots introduced Senate Bill 81, which would allow "a grocery store or drug store to sell cold beer for carryout. [This bill] repeals a criminal penalty for unauthorized cold beer sales."

No doubt the same arguments will be rehashed once again. "Buy it on Saturday, instead," critics will inevitably retort. Why not make it just available to buy one day a week then? Why stop at curbing it at only Sunday?

It's embarrassing for our state to be so behind the rest of the country on this matter. There's no defense for keeping the ban. Boots' bill should be approved. We'll raise a glass to that.